



SELECTING CHILD CARE: A Guide for Parents

Every child in Kansas deserves a safe, healthy and nurturing environment....Good Beginnings Last a Lifetime!

When searching for a child care setting that will meet your child's needs as well as your family's needs:

Think about what kind of child care setting you are interested in for your child. Child Care homes and centers vary in size, training of staff and daily activity programs for children. Ask if a child care home or center is licensed or registered by the Kansas Department of Health and Environment. Child care regulations reduce predictable risks to children when being cared for in the child care setting. Child care regulations also provide consumer protection for you and your child.

***Ask to see the child care license or certificate** which will tell you the type of license or certificate held and the maximum number of children that may be enrolled.

***Ask to review the Notice of Survey Findings provided to the facility showing the results of the latest inspection.** Licensed facilities are inspected at least once every 12 months. **You can also check the compliance history of a regulated child care facility in Kansas by calling the Kansas Department of Health and Environment at 785-296-1270 and requesting a provider check.**

****Visit different child care settings - look and listen -***

*Is the child care home or center a busy, happy place with clean, uncluttered space, sturdy play equipment and a variety of play materials? Are activities conducted both inside and outside? Are poisons and other dangerous substances locked up? Is there room for children to engage in active play, quiet play and rest?

*Are children encouraged to express themselves and satisfy their curiosity? Are they actively engaged in activities? Do the children appear to be enjoying themselves? Are the children welcomed? What do the children do in a typical day? Are the children given choices among activities that are appropriate for the age range of children in care?

*Are the adults working with the children warm, accepting and understanding of children? Are the adults supervising the children well and at the same time enjoying their time with the children? Are the adults educated and trained to work with children?

*How many children are in care? How many adults work with a group of children? A smaller number of young children in a group is the most beneficial in meeting each child's needs.

*Are child care practices like discipline or napping similar to your beliefs and practices? Are children encouraged to learn self-control? How often are children in diapers changed? How do the adults in the program include you in your child's time in care?

*What basic services are provided by the program? What type of meals are served to the children? Does the program provide transportation services?

****After visiting several programs, choose the program that will best meet the needs of your children and your family.***

For additional information about choosing child care or to find help in locating child care, contact the local child care resource and referral agency. To find your local child care resource and referral agency, call 1-877-678-2548.

You may be eligible for assistance (based on your income) in paying for child care costs, to find out contact the local Social and Rehabilitation Services (SRS) office.